

North Judson-San Pierre School Corporation Identification and Services Plan for High Ability Learners

It is the intention of the North Judson-San Pierre School Corporation to make this high ability identification and services plan available at any time to all stakeholders. It will be reviewed and evaluated at least every 3 years by the broad based planning committee.

Mission Statement

The North Judson-San Pierre School Corporation strives to be recognized among Indiana's highest achieving corporations by ensuring that all students reach their academic potential, working in partnership with parents and the community, to become productive and responsible citizens who are successful in a competitive global world. In keeping with this statement, we believe there are students, K-12, whose performance and/or potential for performance in language arts, mathematics and/or general intellectual ability is *significantly* higher than their same-age peers from similar environments and/or with similar experiences. We believe these students come from all socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. To ensure that the unique academic and affective needs of our high ability students will be met, we affirm the following:

- Services will be provided that allow the curriculum to be modified in pace, depth and complexity when compared to the general education curriculum,
- Instructional settings will be designed to address both the academic and affective needs,
- Ongoing identification of high ability students will be provided in a fair and reliable manner

Definition of High Ability

The state's definition is as follows:

Sec. 3. "High ability student" means a student who: (1) performs at or shows the potential for performing at an outstanding level of accomplishment in at least one (1) domain when compared with other students of the same age, experience, or environment; and (2) is characterized by exceptional gifts, talents, motivation, or interests.

Program Goals

1.To ensure effective communication among all stakeholders by

- a. keeping students updated and aware of their personal performance, and
- b. communicating regularly with all stakeholders to provide pertinent information and updates on services using a variety of vehicles, such as online newsletters.

2.To identify a talent pool that reflects the demographics of the district population by

- a. using valid and reliable assessment instruments appropriate for identifying high ability students in our population,
- b. using a multi-faceted identification plan that includes verbal, nonverbal, traditional and non-traditional assessment instruments, and
- c. providing all stakeholders with professional development in identifying high ability students and understanding how gifts and talents are manifested in both home and school environments.

3.To offer appropriate, research-based services, K-12, to meet the needs of high ability students by:

- a. assuring all professional personnel are trained to deliver services that allow opportunities for enrichment, acceleration, or other options that meet the academic needs of high ability students,
- b. ensuring that high ability programming is aligned with local, state and national standards as well as state and national high ability education standards, and
- c. monitoring the fidelity of implementation of these services.

4.To ensure the social, emotional and affective needs of high ability students are being met by

- a. developing and implementing a clearly articulated, research-based, affective curriculum for high ability students, and
- b. providing counseling and guidance services with a counselor experienced in counseling high ability students.

5.To ensure that all personnel working with high ability students have the appropriate knowledge to design and implement services by

- a. requiring all teachers who work with high ability to have or be working on a high ability license or to attend professional development opportunities focusing on academics for the high ability student,
- b. requiring the counselor working with high ability students to have or be working on a high ability license or to attend professional development opportunities focusing on the social and emotional issues of high ability students.

6.To study the value and impact of high ability services by

- a. evaluating the services internally yearly and externally every three years, and

- b. using reliable and valid assessment instruments to ensure high ability learners are making continuous progress commensurate with their achievement and ability levels.

Program Description

The North Judson-San Pierre School Corporation is a rural corporation of approximately 1000 students. High ability services are designed to meet the needs of students whose performance and/or potential for performance is significantly higher than their same-age peers of an equivalent experience or environment. Students are identified through multiple measures of achievement and ability. NJSP offers several service options for meeting the needs of high ability students. Students will be placed in the option that provides the best match for each one's particular abilities and developmental level. High ability services are provided in mathematics and language arts, K-12. Cluster grouping is the organizational model in grades 1-12. At kindergarten, students will be informally assessed during regular classroom activities and provided with differentiated instruction when necessary. Grade skipping, subject skipping, and dual credit options are provided for those who meet the criteria for each option. Services will be provided on-site during the school day in the regular classrooms by teachers best suited to work with high ability students. In addition, there are options for acceleration and enrichment after school, and during the summer. The social and emotional needs of high ability students are met through guidance and counseling services targeting their specific needs and through the use of a clearly articulated affective curriculum.

Nomination & Screening

I. Nominations

- All students are eligible for nominations from any stakeholder. Nominations for consideration for high ability services are accepted throughout the year and selection of students for high ability services occurs in the spring. As a result of regular school wide assessment, ***any student who receives a score at the 90th percentile or above on the normed achievement test and/or who have a score of 115 or above on a standardized test of intelligence or the equivalent are automatically placed in the screening pool.***

The Selection Committee, comprised of Building Coordinators and the District High Ability Coordinator, reviews the data and determines if any student is automatically eligible for services.

II. Screening

- Best practices in the field of high ability education indicate that using multiple criteria ensures that students have multiple ways to demonstrate extraordinary performance or potential in math and language arts.

- *Nominated students need to have two different data points*, including at least *one norm-referenced piece of information*, to be included in the program.
- *Students who have two qualifying data points as a result of regular assessment need no further testing*. These students are *designated high ability and are automatically placed in the appropriate service option*.

Those students still in the screening pool will be provided opportunities to obtain qualifying scores on the appropriate measures for their age, environment, culture, and developmental level. After obtaining parental permission for further testing, students will be assessed using the appropriate instruments from among the following :

- A. Non-verbal/Quantitative/Non-traditional assessments such as the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)
- B. Qualitative/Non-traditional assessments such as Scales for Identifying Gifted Students (SIGS), Adams/Pierce Checklist, observation scales, work samples/ portfolio, student interview, rating scales
- C. Verbal/Quantitative/Traditional assessments, such as In-View, Woodcock Johnson - III, Terra Nova, Pivot norm referenced tests, Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

- Once all students have been assessed and the scores are recorded, students who are eligible for high ability services are placed in the appropriate option(s). A list of these students is circulated to all teachers to see if they believe a student who should be on the list is missing. If a stakeholder nominates a child missing from the list, *the student's file is re-examined by the Building Coordinators*. If the child was previously nominated, or a new file is opened or the child is newly nominated, additional measures may be used to assess or reassess the student.

Eligibility Determination & Placement

1. To be eligible for placement, students must have the following information: at least *one norm-referenced piece of information (placing in the 95th percentile or higher/ scoring a 120 IQ or higher/ or a pass plus on the state assessment score)* and/or *one other point of data* that meet the accepted criteria set by the district. *Placement is determined by the Selection Committee*.

All kindergarten students receive differentiated instruction in the regular classroom. Identified students in grades 1 through 6 are placed in a cluster classroom and will receive services appropriate to their needs.

- Identified students in grades 7 through 8 are placed in a high ability challenge class by subject.
- Identified students in grades 9 through 12 are placed in honors, AP and/or Dual Credit classes by subject.

- Students whose performance indicates advanced knowledge appropriate for a higher grade level may be subject or grade skipped.
- ***Students in all placements must maintain a B- average or above to remain in the placement.***
- ***Students who do not maintain one norm-referenced piece of information (placing in the 95th percentile or higher/ scoring a 120 IQ or higher/ or a pass plus on the state assessment score) and/or one other point of data that meet the accepted criteria set by the district shall be placed on probation for the upcoming school year. These students may still participate in all High Ability activities and will be reevaluated the following spring.***
- Should a student's grades fall below the B- level, the Selection Committee will follow the Exit Procedure and consider a different placement.

Students whose scores do not meet the eligibility requirements during the selection process will have yearly opportunities to be reassessed.

Petitioning

Any stakeholder who disagrees with a non-placement decision for a student can petition the Selection Committee for reconsideration by completing a Petition Form available from the school's office.

- If a stakeholder nominates a child who was not deemed eligible, the student's file is re-examined by the Selection Committee. If the child was previously nominated or a new file is opened the child is newly nominated.
- Additional measures may be used to assess or reassess the student. Students whose scores do not meet the eligibility requirements during the selection process will have yearly opportunities to be reassessed.

If a stakeholder still wants to petition a non-placement decision after the committee has re-examined the student's file and after further testing has been explored, a Petition Form is available at each school's office. The appeal should be addressed to the principal of the school. Should the principal or superintendent choose to reverse the Selection Committee's decision, additional solid evidence (which must include a data point within a year's time) must be presented that indicates high ability beyond a reasonable doubt.

Exit Procedure

Once a student has been designated as high ability and has been placed in one or more service options, the following procedure must be followed to exit the student from that placement.

- I. Moving from the district removes a student from the program. If a student returns within the same year, he/she will automatically be reinstated. After that time, if a student returns, the student's files will be re-evaluated.

- II. If a parent wants to remove a student from the program, there will be an exit Interview.
- Parents will be informed of the negative consequences that could affect the child in the future if he or she does not remain in the program.
 - If the parent still wants the child removed, the parent's wishes will be honored.
 - If the parent wants the child reinstated at a future date, the request must be submitted in writing and approved by the committee.
 - If more than two years have passed, the child will need to be re-evaluated through the selection process.
- III. Appropriate services to meet each student's needs are a right, not a privilege.
- When students are not successful with the services provided by the high ability program, every effort will be made to provide the appropriate scaffolding for the child to be successful.
- A. Behavioral problems
- Behavior alone is not an acceptable reason to exit a student from his/her current placement. If an issue or problem occurs, a case conference will be held with the parent, child, high ability teacher, High Ability Coordinator, guidance counselor, and any other pertinent staff.
 - A behavior plan will be constructed and put in place to allow the child to be successful. Periodic checks will occur for the next six weeks to assure the child has been given the time and tools necessary to change the behavior.

B. Academic non-success (below a B- average)

If an issue or problem occurs, a case conference will be held with the parent, child, high ability teacher, High Ability Coordinator, guidance counselor, and any other stakeholder. A success plan will be constructed and put in place to allow the child to be successful. Periodic checks will occur for the next six weeks to assure the child has been given the time and tools necessary to change the behavior. If no change has taken place during the timeframe, then the child's placement will be reconsidered. For example, if the child is currently in an honors class, the child may be placed in a regular classroom where the teacher will differentiate the instruction as necessary. If re-evaluation is requested, the student will go through the selection process again.

Social and Emotional Needs

NJSP recognizes the importance of developing the social and emotional needs of high ability students and provides the necessary personnel and services necessary to do so.

- The high ability counselor is recommended to have a high ability license, have taken a college level course focusing on the social and emotional needs of high ability students, or have participated in professional development focusing on the social and emotional needs of high ability students.
- State guidelines indicate that high ability students need a differentiated affective curriculum to enable their social/emotional growth. Some attention to the affective needs of high ability students are imbedded into the high ability curriculum, such as choice and challenge.
- The affective curriculum includes career planning, study skills and time management as well as other issues specific to high ability students. Both individual and group counseling is available. Focus groups are formed as needed.
- The teaching staff will have an opportunity for professional development training in the affective needs of high ability students in order to work effectively with these students, as well as refer them to the counselor when necessary. Follow-up training will be provided on a yearly basis, or as new information dictates.

Personnel

- I. The administration will be knowledgeable on best practices in high ability education by attending professional development opportunities focusing on identifying and serving high ability students.
- II. The NJSP High Ability Corporation Coordinator is required to have or be working on a high ability license. He or she facilitates the professional development relevant to high ability education and supervises the high ability program of the corporation. He or she implements all aspects of the identification and services plan and ensures that the program is aligned with state and national guidelines. The High Ability Corporation Coordinator will plan and implement staff training about high ability students as needed. The High Ability Corporation Coordinator will periodically, with the help of Building Coordinators, conduct an internal and external evaluation of the district's identification and services plan to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement of the program.
- III. Building Coordinators have or are working on a high ability license or attend professional development opportunities focusing on academics. They work closely with the corporation coordinator and conduct day-to-day operations within their respective buildings. They support the differentiation being appropriately implemented within the cluster classrooms and provide a tool for self-monitoring such as the Differentiated Classroom Observation Scale. They communicate between building levels to facilitate the transition of high ability students from one level to another. They communicate with parents via a Differentiated Education Plan (DEP). Each year teachers fill out a form which is reviewed by the coordinator and shared with the parents.

- IV. Cluster classroom teachers and teachers working with Challenge/Honors/AP/Dual Credit classes have or are working on a high ability license or attend professional development opportunities focusing on academics. These teachers are responsible for the day to day implementation of the regular classroom curriculum as well as the cluster group curriculum within their classroom. They collaborate with other teachers, the Building Coordinator and the Corporation Coordinator. They receive additional professional development opportunities specific to working with high ability students through attendance at professional development workshops and conferences.

Professional Development Plan

Periodic school-based whole staff professional development is offered to assure that all staff members understand the identification and needs of high ability students. All personnel involved with high ability education will stay current in the field by attending conferences such as the Indiana Association for the Gifted, Share-IN, and NAGC as well as workshops aimed specifically at high ability education.

Glossary of terms

Stakeholders

- Teachers
- Parents
- Administrators
- School Board
- Students
- Broad Based Planning Committee (in Indiana Administrative Code, “Broad-based planning committee” means a diverse group with representation from educators, parents, students, community members, and other stakeholders; organized for the purposes of planning and development of programs for high ability students.)

Cluster group

- A homogenous group of students learning together at a similar level

Data points

- Test scores and other data used to determine the placement of a student

Quantitative testing

- Fixed response options, less in-depth but more breadth, more generalized (example: ISTEP+, Acuity, SAT, Terra Nova)

Qualitative testing

- Unstructured or semi-structured responses, more in-depth, less generalized (example: checklists, work samples, observation)

Reviewed 6/13/19

Notes